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Two South Carolina Businessmen Plead Guilty To Causing False Statements to the Federal Election Commission

WASHINGTON – Two South Carolina businessmen have pleaded guilty to causing numerous federal campaigns to make false statements to the Federal Election Commission, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division announced today.

David Therrell Collier, 63, and Robert Howell Price III, 47, of Columbia, S.C., each pleaded guilty before Judge Royce C. Lamberth of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The defendants pleaded guilty to one-count information charging them with causing a false statement to be made. The information was filed with Judge Lamberth on July 31, 2007.

Collier and Price face up to five years in prison, a fine of \$250,000, and three years of supervised release. Sentencing has been set for Nov. 19, 2007, at 10:00 a.m.

As part of their pleas, both defendants admitted that, beginning in 1997, they worked with a tribe of Native Americans in South Carolina to operate a tribal gaming facility. Collier and Price also sought to further the gaming interests of that tribe with certain federal elected officials. To do so, from March 2000 through September 2004, Collier and Price solicited and obtained campaign contributions totaling over \$65,000 from friends, family members, and business associates. Collier and Price directed those contributions to candidates for federal office and federal elected officials, and then caused the contributing individuals, or conduits, to be reimbursed with tribal funds. These actions caused the campaign committees of the candidates and officials to unwittingly file false reports with the Federal Election Commission listing the individuals as the contributors, rather than the tribe.

This case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorneys Eileen Gleason and John P. Pearson of the Public Integrity Section, which is headed by Chief William M. Welch II. The case was investigated by the Department of the Interior Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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